

1979

A Song: [When a Man Loves a Woman]; When a Man Loves a Woman by Percy Sledge; When a Man Loves a Woman by Percy Sledge; When a Man Loves a Woman

David Shapiro

Follow this and additional works at: <https://ir.uiowa.edu/iowareview>

Part of the [Creative Writing Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Shapiro, David. "A Song: [When a Man Loves a Woman]; When a Man Loves a Woman by Percy Sledge; When a Man Loves a Woman by Percy Sledge; When a Man Loves a Woman." *The Iowa Review* 10.1 (1979): 48-52. Web.
Available at: <https://doi.org/10.17077/0021-065X.2444>

This Contents is brought to you for free and open access by Iowa Research Online. It has been accepted for inclusion in The Iowa Review by an authorized administrator of Iowa Research Online. For more information, please contact lib-ir@uiowa.edu.

A Song · *David Shapiro*

When a man loves a woman
the words withdraw to the palace
he demands his words and rejoices seeing them neighing
 into his face
the words in whiteness the words race the hasty words
 stand around and excite their breasts

When a man loves a woman
he wraps his coat of words about his shoulders
scaled with gold and white mountain words
at the same time he fits for wearing both his word and his world

When a man loves a woman
he seizes the strong word with violence and says trembling
Now Oh word never disappearing
now the world is present and the maximum Actor wrote you (not spoken)

When a man loves a woman
the words preside over the pool and the sounding streams
the king of the sky spits and the nymph grace note
of rivers grace note to my mind you know I have preferred
 you alone to all placed you willingly in a part of
 my words

WHEN A MAN LOVES A WOMAN BY PERCY SLEDGE

When a man loves a woman
Hospitals are supplied with beds and clothing
If she is life nearer the front
He is fitted with beds kitchens and dispensaries

When a man
the sick and wounded upon their hands like wagons
He gives his ambulance
he is incapable of keeping up with the troops

When a man
the Indian ambulances are carts drawn by bullocks and mules
Very strongly made they are holding two men
lying down and four sitting up alert as a driver

When a man loves a woman
the wounded man is transferred to a hospital ship
in the comfortable swinging cot in the airy ward
and the ice flies into the hot wind and the bed rises on the shore

Yes when a man loves a woman
the bonds of union are drawn considerably closer
In the War however
the present and the past overlap and the skeleton foot of time

WHEN A MAN LOVES A WOMAN BY PERCY SLEDGE

When a man loves a woman by Percy Sledge
he is like a polygonal block of limestone
She is the city and the city wall measuring 2½m
Two of his gates are still to some extent preserved

When a man loves a woman
Remains can be traced and the traces are finely ruined
Huge blocked halls arise
Two approaches to the citadel added and blocked on the north

When a man loves a woman a genus of the trees
Parts of the world are fruit
Used for good and light
And the man is called the candlenut

When a man loves a woman
she is the vanishing and the lace and the lake
and the seeds contained in the decorated Museo de Ville
The absent town has a picturesque aspect yes

Yes when a man loves a woman
he wants the ruler who would be noble the Swabian line
His nobles whom he tried to cow by sporadic acts of violence
rebelled against him leaving a will and Sancho and Seville and civil war

When a man loves a woman

When a man loves a woman
He has fallen by the art of his stepmother
and drawn apart by frightened automobiles
has satisfied his father's hit and run punishment

When a man
he has burdened himself with equal arms
to outstrip the wind on an automobile
like a spy approached the camps of the Greeks daring to
demand the automobile of Achilles

When a man loves a woman
he beholds her far off like a headquarters
first having pursued her through the void
through the long void with a short arrow

When a man loves a woman
he stops his Toyota and leaps from his front seat
and comes up to her half dead with a safety belt
and his neck being pressed with her foot he wrenches
the wrench from her right hand

And dips it shining in his alto jugulo (throat)
When a man loves a woman
moreover he adds these words
You lie stretched out like Italy and the wind shakes her
hair flying into the opposing comb

When a man loves a woman
each one withdraws into its own space a signal being given
they plant their spears into the ground
and lean upon their shadows then the mothers pour out with zeal

When a man loves a woman
the unarmed populace and the powerless sold men beseige them
the snowy words lie on the oaken typewriter
the black words follow the combs combing out your hair

When a man loves a woman
then the tiger is hungry
and you who composed the songs of shepherds and were audacious
stop singing beneath the terminal the bus station and the goons
(cherish me, Naples!)

and the ninth morning displays you homeless as a funeral offering

When a man loves a woman
his neck is untouched and suddenly the words are humming
in his carcass like bees
and his dissolved entrails and breaking through the page
and immense clouds of words are drawn out

WHEN A MAN LOVES A WOMAN

When a man loves a woman
he attacks the fleet, which lay concealed
and commands his rejoicing associates to bring fire
and glowing he fills his hand with a burning pain

When a man loves a woman
he knows the sound and trembling flees back
he flies and drives the dark band across the television set
as when a constellation passes over alas cardiologists

When a man loves a woman
they rejoice sprinkled with the blood of his brothers
and exchange their homes and sweet dwelling
and seeking another bed lying beneath another bed

When a man loves a woman
I beg this last favor (pity the seething surface) does she hear
any words
which when she shall have granted to me
I will dismiss her gratified in my words sisters

When a man loves a woman by Percy Sledge

When a man loves a woman
his right hand is torn from his horse and bears him off
and a story is raised then the window-shade presses in on him
and the Venetian blinds beat the air with their slats

When a man loves a woman
grapes increase hair and spontaneous flourishes elsewhere
but the stones are established in the empty globe
whence woman a hardy race were produced

When a man loves a woman
the prospect may feed the hungry mind but the land will not give
also you will ask what depth the trenches
Do not commit the vine even to the light furrow the earth is low

When a man loves a woman
it sinks its root into the Hall
and for many years strong arms and branches move this way and that
Nor let your yard incline nor plant the lazy hazel among the vines
nor break the twigs (love the earth)